REMARKS

I.   Introduction

        Claims 1-24, 42-46, and 52-56 have been cancelled.
Claims 25, 26, 28, 33, 35, 41, 47, and 57 have been amended.
Claims 27, 29-32, 34, 36-40, 48-51, and 58-61 are also in the
case. This Reply is accompanied by a separate Submission of
Replacement Drawing Sheet, with which a replacement FIG. 2 is
being submitted to obviate the Examiner's objection to that
FIG. Reconsideration of this application in light of the
following further remarks is hereby respectfully requested.

II.   Unelected Claims 1-24, 42-46, and 52-56

        Unelected claims 1-24, 42-46, and 52-56 have been
cancelled as requested in the Office action.

III. The Objection to the Drawings

        This Reply is accompanied by a separate Submission
of Replacement Drawing Sheet, with which a new FIG. 2 is
being submitted. This new FIG. 2 includes descriptive text
for boxes 250 and 294 as required by the Examiner. In the
case of box 250, this text is "DEMUX" (coming, for example,
from "demultiplexer 250" in paragraph [0039] of applicants'
specification). In the case of box 294, this text is "MUX"
(coming, for example, from "multiplexer 294" in
paragaraph [0041] of applicants' specification). The
objection to the drawings should accordingly be withdrawn.

IV.   The Objection to Claim 26

        Claim 26 has been objected to because of improper
use of a definite article. Claim 26 has been amended to
correct this error, and the objection to this claim should
accordingly be withdrawn.

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V.   The Rejections Based on 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 33 and 35 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as allegedly indefinite. These claims have been amended to remove the allegedly indefinite wording. The § 112 rejection of claims 33 and 35 should accordingly be withdrawn.

VI. The Prior Art Rejections

A.   Claim 25

Claim 25 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by Aung et al. U.S. patent application publication 2001/0033188 (hereinafter "Aung"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 25 has been amended to specify that the first further clock signal is used to assemble in parallel a group of bits equal in number to the number of bits in one of the padded blocks without regard for where in the group padding bits occur. In the illustrative embodiment shown in applicants' FIG. 2, this is like the output signal of element 232c, which is used by demultiplexer 250 to assemble and output in parallel a group of 66 bits (66 being the number of bits in one padded block of data in this embodiment). Claim 25 further specifies that the second further clock signal is used to separate from successive ones of the above-mentioned groups successive unpadded blocks and to output each such unpadded block in parallel. In the illustrative embodiment shown in applicants' FIG. 2, this is like the output signal of element 232b, which is used by elements 260 and 270 to extract and output an unpadded block (i.e., the 64 bits on the lower 64 output leads from element 270).

Nothing like what claim 25 now specifies is shown in Aung. The Office action asserts that a padded block in Aung is a packet of several successive data words preceded by

a serial header, as mentioned in paragraph [0003] of Aung.
But even if this is true, Aung never suggests assembling an
entire packet-size group of bits in parallel, and without
regard for where header bits occur, in order to further
process such groups to get rid of the header information and
proceed with only the non-header data words of an entire
packet in parallel. In contrast, applicants' claim 25 is
very clear that in applicants' invention groups of bits equal
in number to the size of an entire padded block are assembled
in parallel, and without regard for padding bit location,
using a first clock signal derived from a common source.
Then a second clock signal derived from that same source is
used to separate from successive ones of the above-mentioned
groups successive unpadded blocks and to output each of those
unpadded blocks in parallel. Again, nothing like this is
taught by Aung. Claim 25 is therefore not anticipated by
Aung, and claim 25 should accordingly be allowed.

    B.   <u>Claims 26-41</u>

       Claims 26-31, 33, 34, and 37-41 have been rejected
as anticipated by Aung. Claim 32 has been rejected under
35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious from Aung. (Claims 35 and 36 have
only been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, as discussed
earlier in these remarks; but they are mentioned again here
because they are dependent claims in this group of dependent
claims.) These anticipation and obviousness rejections are
also respectfully traversed.

       Claims 26-41 are all dependent from claim 25.
Claim 25 has been shown above to be not anticipated by Aung.
Claim 25 is also not obvious from Aung because there is not
even the remotest suggestion in Aung of the claim 25
specifics discussed in the preceding section of these
remarks. Claim 25 is therefore neither anticipated by nor
obvious from Aung, and the same is accordingly true for all

of the claims that are dependent from claim 25 (i.e.,
claims 26-41).

C.   Claim 47

Claim 47 has also been rejected as anticipated by
Aung. This rejection is again respectfully traversed.

Claim 47 has been amended to specify using a first
clock signal to assemble in parallel a group of successive
data bits equal in size to one entire padded block without
regard for where in the group the padding bits are. Aung
does not disclose or suggest assembling in parallel a number
of data bits equal to the size of an entire packet (i.e.,
data words plus header). Nor does Aung disclose or suggest
doing this without regard for where in the group the header
bits occur. Claim 47 further specifies using a second clock
signal to separate from successive ones of the groups
successive unpadded blocks, each of which is output in
parallel. Again, Aung does not disclose or suggest
outputting the entire unpadded portion of a packet in
parallel.

For all of the foregoing reasons, claim 47 is not
anticipated by Aung. Claim 47 should therefore be allowed.

D.   Claims 48-51

Claims 48, 50, and 51 have been rejected as
anticipated by Aung. Claim 49 has been rejected as obvious
from Aung. These rejections are also respectfully traversed.

All of claims 48-51 are dependent from claim 47,
which has been shown above to be not anticipated by Aung.
Claim 47 is also not obvious from Aung because there is not
even a hint in Aung of the claim 47 specifics discussed in
the preceding section of these remarks. Claim 47 is
therefore neither anticipated by nor obvious from Aung, and

the same is accordingly true for all of the claims that are dependent from claim 47 (i.e., claims 48-51).
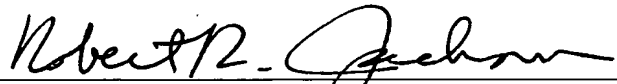
E.   Claims 57-61

Claims 57, 58, 60, and 61 have been rejected as anticipated by Aung. Claim 59 has been rejected as obvious from Aung. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 57-61 are respectively apparatus-claim-analogs of method claims 47-51. The same reasons given above for the allowability of method claims 47-51 apply again to apparatus claims 57-61. Claims 57-61 should therefore be allowed for the same reasons that claims 47-51 should be allowed.

VII. Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 25-41, 47-51, and 57-61 are allowable. Claims 1-24, 42-46, and 52-56 have been cancelled. The objection to the drawings has been obviated by the accompanying Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheet. This application is therefore in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are accordingly respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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